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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Training

25X1 SUBJECT : Foreign Language Development Program

REFERENCES : a. Foreign Language Development Program Regulations
b. Memorandum for DCI from Chief, Ad Hoc Committee onDocument No. 1004 Foreign Language Development Program, subject:
NO CHANGE in Class. ☐ "Foreign Language Development Program," dated
17 February 1956☒ DECLASSIFIED
Class. CHANGED TO: TS S c.c Memorandum for DTR from EO/DDP, subject: "Proposed
Language Development Program Regulations," dated
17 August 1956Auth: DDA MEMO, 4 Apr 77
Auth: DDA REG. 77/5743Date: 10/4/78 By:

1. On 17 August 1956 we forwarded to you an interim reply to your request for our concurrence or comments on the drafts of the proposed regulations and advised you that we would provide you with our position on this new and important basic policy and program as soon as possible after Labor Day. We have now completed our review of the problem of language development within the Clandestine Services and have been able in fair measure to sketch out the organization, administration and guide lines for such a program and as a result we are prepared to work with you in a revision of reference a.

2. The need for language development within Clandestine Services is fully recognized and of grave concern to us. In consequence, we appreciate the stimulus you provide through your proposed regulations. Our thought is that the problem can best be attacked in phases, as outlined in paragraphs 4, 5, 6, and 7 below.

3. This action would take cognizance of certain peculiarities of the Clandestine Services' organization and programs, namely:

a. Provide for the early identification and development of personnel with language aptitude.

b. Closely relate language development to our needs within the ever-present handicap of insufficient people to do our job.

c. Emphasize language development during the period of field assignment.

d. Reward individual initiative for language development achieved outside the scope of duty assignments.

e. Fully integrate language development into Clandestine Services' career service planning procedures.

4. Phase 1: Establishment of a Foreign Language Register.

a. This phase would embody:

(1) Large-scale language aptitude testing for all our personnel falling within age (possibly forty and under) and grade (possibly GS-13 and under) limitations, which ordinarily would preclude Agency language-development effort.

(2) Language aptitude testing as an integral part of our entrance-on-duty procedure.

(3) Large-scale language proficiency testing of all our employees who have indicated some degree of language proficiency.

b. This phase would require a regulation setting forth policy and procedures for the orderly scheduling and testing of our employees and the establishment of records.

c. This phase would provide the statistical and personnel data required for intelligent judgments on actions contemplated in the succeeding phases.

5. Phase 2: The Determination of Clandestine Services' Needs for Language Competence. In this phase the Clandestine Services, in light of the operational programs, would establish foreign language needs in terms of specific languages projected over the next several years. These needs would be reviewed annually.

6. Phase 3: Encouragement of Voluntary Language Development, Particularly During Field Assignment.

a. This phase would embody:

(1) Provision of part-time language training prior to overseas assignment. The Agency would underwrite the cost of study either through internal part-time class instruction or through external training, and, where operationally feasible, would contribute study time in equal proportion to that contributed by the employee from his own time. This study would not be limited to those with immediate assignments abroad, but would also include those who project overseas assignment as part of their Agency careers. This study would not in and of itself establish eligibility for monetary awards. Likewise, it should be limited to those who display reasonable aptitude and whose age and grade are consistent with developmental action.

(2) Encouragement of intensive voluntary language study, particularly during the period of overseas assignment through substantial, annual, proficiency awards after successful testing for achievement of goals met through training at Agency expense, partly on Agency time and partly on the employee's time.

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(3) Loss of annual award if the employee is unable to pass periodic language proficiency tests.

(4) Recognition through suitable monetary awards of voluntary effort expended during the period of CIA employment for acquisition of a foreign language. Such recognition would be based on appropriate proficiency tests or other evidence of accomplishment. It would permit retroactive award for him who can prove that voluntary study or voluntary contribution to study in the past has enhanced his language capability on behalf of the Agency.

b. This phase would require:

(1) The establishment of Clandestine Services' criteria and procedures for both Headquarters and the Field together with

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(2) Re-examination of the DCI approved awards criteria, thereby emphasizing award for voluntary effort over and above the normal workload.

(3) The expansion by the Office of Training of its class and laboratory facilities for after-duty-hours study.

c. This phase reflects the DDP viewpoint that greater advantage should be taken by Clandestine Services' employees of overseas tours to acquire language competence. Also, it is impossible for an incentive program to combat shortage of personnel. Incentive awards will stimulate language development only when the hope of an award inspires the use of non-Agency time for language development.

7. Phase 4: Provision for Duty Assignment to Full-Time Language Study.

a. This phase embodies an increase in and systematic assignment of Clandestine Services personnel to full-time language study, without reference to incentive awards.

b. This would be accomplished wholly through the career service planning procedures within the Clandestine Services. We intend to use this machinery (see [REDACTED] 28 August 1956) to give language requirements as developed in phase 2, described above, adequate consideration in career planning development.

c. This phase recognizes the indivisible bond between operations and language competence required within the Clandestine Services. Language qualifications have been consistently recognized in the hiring, assignment and promotion of Clandestine Services personnel. An assignment to full-time language study is one type of Clandestine Services duty assignment. Consequently, there is no room for monetary incentive in the duty assignment of Clandestine Services personnel to foreign language study. Adequate language development can only be achieved

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within a period of tight personnel ceiling by the planned assignment of otherwise qualified operational personnel to full-time language study.

8. We propose to examine each phase of the above outlined plan annually to insure its adequacy in meeting our needs for language competence and its conformance with the DCI policy of language development. It is our hope that the above outlined plan can, to the extent that it affects Agency issuances, be incorporated into your revision of subject regulations. We offer our assistance in reconciling our viewpoint with that of other Agency elements.



Richard Helms
Chief of Operations, DD/P

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cc: Regulations Control Staff
Assistant Deputy Director (Support)